The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant.  
*Albert Einstein*

Sturm und Drang is sometimes translated as ‘Storm and Drive’ or ‘Storm and Urge,’ or more usually ‘Storm and Stress’.  It is the name for a loose movement in German literature and music (1760s-1780s) that pre-dated Romanticism.  It is known for its focus on individual subjectivity, the expression of extremes of emotion in reaction to the restrictions of rationalism put forward by the Enlightenment.  Isaiah Berlin describes a Counter-Enlightenment.

One example would be Joseph Haydn’s minor-key works of 1772 are thought of not only as an expression of personal turmoil in Haydn’s life, but as a product of the Zeitgeist from which the literary Sturm und Drang movement also emerged.

The German literary movement of the 1770s is generally associated with a small collection of works of fiction.  These demonstrated the authors’ preoccupation with intense emotions, the irrational, the unconscious, and the spiritual; and their rejection of the conventions of civilized society in favour of recovering a sense of oneness with nature.  However the historical significance of the literary Sturm und Drang derived primarily from the aesthetic and philosophical ideas that underpinned the creation of these texts.

The key thinkers of the movement were Goethe, Johann Gottfried von Herder (a student of Immanuel Kant) and Johann Georg Hamann.  Their philosophical world-view involved a rejection of the rationalism and neoclassicism of the Enlightenment.  Instead they advocated a pantheistic view of nature, the contemplation of which was conceived as a *spiritual experience*.  This necessitated an engagement with the aesthetic category of the *sublime*, as a way to explaining the human aesthetic experience of nature in its most awe-inspiring and magnificent manifestations.  Goethe and Schiller, went on to produce works of literature that formed the body and soul of German classical thought.

This entailed a rejection of the secular outlook of many Enlightenment *philosophes*, and represented a synthesis of the ideas of earlier thinkers: Spinoza, Rousseau, Diderot, and Edmund Burke.

Isaiah Berlin’s essays on Vico, Hamann and Herder are among his most important studies in the *history of ideas*: the critical recovery of the ideas of the Counter-Enlightenment.
Isaiah Berlin’s essays on Vico, Hamann and Herder are among his most important studies in the history of ideas: the critical recovery of the ideas of the Counter-Enlightenment and the explanation of its appeal, consequences and what it anticipated. Vico, for example is credited with founding the human sciences. Hamann offered the first strong attack on Enlightenment rationalism and became a source of romanticism. Herder, started a move towards populism and European nationalism, rejecting universalism and rationalism but championing cultural pluralism. Berlin also identified much of the next centuries’ irrationalism and suffering to the historicism and particularism they advocated. The ‘Sturmer und Drangers’ demonstrated an awareness of the dialectical relationship between 'self-creation' and 'self-destruction', which Friedrich Schlegel was later to promote as the key to the creative process.
Gerhard Richter (1969) *Seascape (Cloudy)*

Anselm Keifer (1969) *For Genet*
So we can think of Romanticism as a movement led by German philosophers who subverted the idea that there are moral and political truths that all rational people can discover and verify for themselves. Its elements include:

(a) The doctrine of freedom in the philosophy of Kant.
(b) The individualism and anti-universalism that attained to fame with Herder
(c) The interpretation of life in terms of the aesthetic models of Fichte, Schelling, Schlegel and the other philosophers.

For Berlin the revolution of Romanticism involved a rejection of the idea that

(a) All genuine questions can be answered
(b) All these answers are knowable
(c) All these answers must be compatible with one another

Berlin outlines these three principles as the basis upon which the whole Western tradition rested. Their rejection constituted the greatest single shift in the consciousness of the West. Berlin argues that while the Enlightenment left these
Berlin outlines these three principles as the basis upon which the whole Western tradition rested. Their rejection constituted the greatest single shift in the consciousness of the West. Berlin argues that while the Enlightenment left these principles intact, Romanticism questioned the belief that there is one single solution to all human ills and that we must impose this solution no matter what cost. This laid the foundations for "liberalism, toleration, decency and the appreciation of the imperfections of life", usually associated with the Enlightenment's commitment to reason and objectivity (Berlin, 1999: 146-147).

If we reiterate this: in his search for a definition of the phenomena Berlin avoids a generalization but tells us that Romanticism was:

(a) the largest recent movement to transform the lives and the thought of the Western world
(b) the greatest single shift in the consciousness of the West that has occurred,
(c) a gigantic and radical transformation, after which nothing was ever the same

At some point between 1760 and 1830 a shift in thinking took place in Germany. This involved an increasing emphasis on particular cultures, languages, customs as opposed to a consciousness being guided by universal truths, universal canons of art. The roots of Romanticism are: irrationalism, anti-rationalism, unconscious drives, the dark forces of human nature; the key figures range from Herder, a founder of the German Sturm und Drang movement, and Kant in terms of his moral philosophy.

The transformation of values Berlin outlines include the claim that objective moral values are not discoverable in the nature but are imposed, willed and created. For Berlin this sense that ethics, like works of art, are personal creations was a significant change in consciousness since the end of the Middle ages and the rise of Christianity. Berlin is interested in 'The Counter-Enlightenment' that he traces to Hamann, Herder and Vico who he locates as anticipating the divide between the Naturwissenschaften and Geisteswissenschaften—the study of nature (science) and the history of ideas (the arts).

With Hamann, God is closer to the abnormal than the normal: the normal do not really understand what goes on. All the great masters who excel in human endeavour were sick man in one way or another: Hercules, Socrates St. Paul, the whole violent doctrine of personal self assertion is at the core of the German Sturm und Drang movement. The only worthwhile work Sturm und Drang produced was Werther by Goethe: a novel about how because of his values there is no way in which Werther can avoid suicide.

With Herder one of the main doctrines which contributed to the Romantic movement was expressionism; he believed that one of the fundamental functions of human beings was to express to speak to express our full nature. Herder was a direct disciple of Hamann. Previously the value of a work of art consisted in its being what it was: the artist took the position of the purveyor who's private life was no business of the person who bought the work of art. Mozart and Haydn produced beautiful musical compositions their work was not supposed to be about them — but Herder took a different position whereby though the wok of art is the expression of somebody: it is always a voice speaking: if a folk song speaks to you, it is because the people who made it where Germans like yourself. This is the doctrine of art as communication: some things are made consciously and some things are made unconsciously. There is an anticipation is of this in Vico’s New Science and we can see its influence stretch to the Expressionist’s Der Sturm gallery and artists like Keifer or Richter’s interests above.

The Enlightenment rationalists believed in one coherent body of logically deduced conclusions: a single system of knowledge answering all questions, and established by solid chains of logical argument from universally valid axioms. But David Hume demonstrated that no logical links existed between truths of fact and such a priori truths as logic or mathematics. While Enlightenment writers such as Voltaire, d’Alembert and Condorcet believed that the development of the arts and sciences was the most powerful human weapon in the fight against ignorance, superstition,
demonstrated that no logical links existed between truths of fact and such a priori truths as logic or mathematics. While Enlightenment writers such as Voltaire, d’Alembert and Condorcet believed that the development of the arts and sciences was the most powerful human weapon in the fight against ignorance, superstition, fanaticism, oppression and barbarism, Rousseau believed that it was the institutions of civilisation that were the major factor in the corruption of individuals and their alienation from nature and the life of natural justice, social equality, and spontaneous human feeling.

If anyone had listened to him (and they didn’t) Vico had previously contested that mathematics was certain only because it was a human invention rather than the objective structure of reality. Mathematical modeling was a method not a body of truths; it can establish regularities — the occurrence of phenomena in the external world — but not discover why they occurred as they did, or to what end.

For Vico, our lives are expressions of attempts to survive, satisfy desires, understand each other and the past out of which we emerge. The institutions which embody our activities comprise a vision of the world. Language, religious rites, myths, laws, social, religious, the law, are forms of self-expression conveying what we strive for. As such they follow discernible patterns that make it possible to reconstruct the life of other societies by finding out the type of framework of ideas, feelings, generated the poetry, monuments, mythology which were their natural expression. Vico denied the rationalist doctrine of a timeless natural law the truths of which could have been known in principle to anyone, at any time, anywhere. In doing so he set out the foundations of comparative cultural anthropology and of comparative historical linguistics, aesthetics, jurisprudence; language, ritual, monuments, and especially mythology.

For Vico, we ask different questions of the universe, and our answers are shaped accordingly. As time progresses the symbols and acts that express them, alter or become obsolete in the course of cultural development; to understand the answers one must understand the questions that preoccupy an age or a culture; they are not constant nor necessarily more profound because they resemble our own more than others that are less familiar to us.
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Some links for Isaiah Berlin’s work:

http://berlin.wolf.ox.ac.uk/lists/nachlass/romanticism.pdf

http://berlin.wolf.ox.ac.uk/published_works/ac/counter-enlightenment.pdf